

REMARKS

The present Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed March 6, 2006.

By this amendment, claims 1-26 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 27-39 are newly presented. No new matter is presented by the new claims.

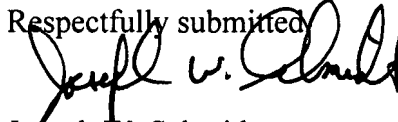
In the outstanding Office Action, the prior pending claims were rejected in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,090,654 to Lotito. It is respectfully submitted that the present invention as embodied in new independent claims 27 and 38 is patentably distinguishable from Lotito '654. For example, Lotito '654 fails to teach or suggest the recited "each ridge having an outer ridge surface dimensioned and positioned to engage interior wall portions of the blood vessel in supporting relation therewith to substantially minimize collapse of the vessel and occlusion of the fluid port, the outer ridge surface of at least one of the ridges defining a plurality of lateral channels therein, the lateral channels being longitudinally spaced relative to the longitudinal axis of the elongated body" as required by independent claim 27, or the recited "each ridge having an outer ridge surface dimensioned and positioned to engage interior wall portions of the blood vessel in supporting relation therewith to substantially minimize collapse of the vessel and occlusion of the fluid port, the outer ridge surfaces each defining a plurality of lateral channels therein, the lateral channels being longitudinally spaced relative to the longitudinal axis of the elongated body" as required by independent claim 38. This feature is, e.g., represented in the embodiment of Figure 8 of Applicant's specification, more notably, the lateral channels 156 which "provide additional open area that prevents occlusion of inlet port 114" (pg. 10, lns 18-20 of Applicant's specification). Lotito '654 is devoid of this feature and the structural capabilities thereto provided.

U.S. Patent No. 5,374,245 to Mahurkar was also cited in the Office Action for its disclosure of multiple lumens and ports; however, Mahurkar '245 fails to disclose the recited "lateral channels" - the significance of which is hereinabove discussed.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the references of record disclose or suggest the present invention as recited in the claims considered individually or in combination, considered in whole or in part. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections and allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted



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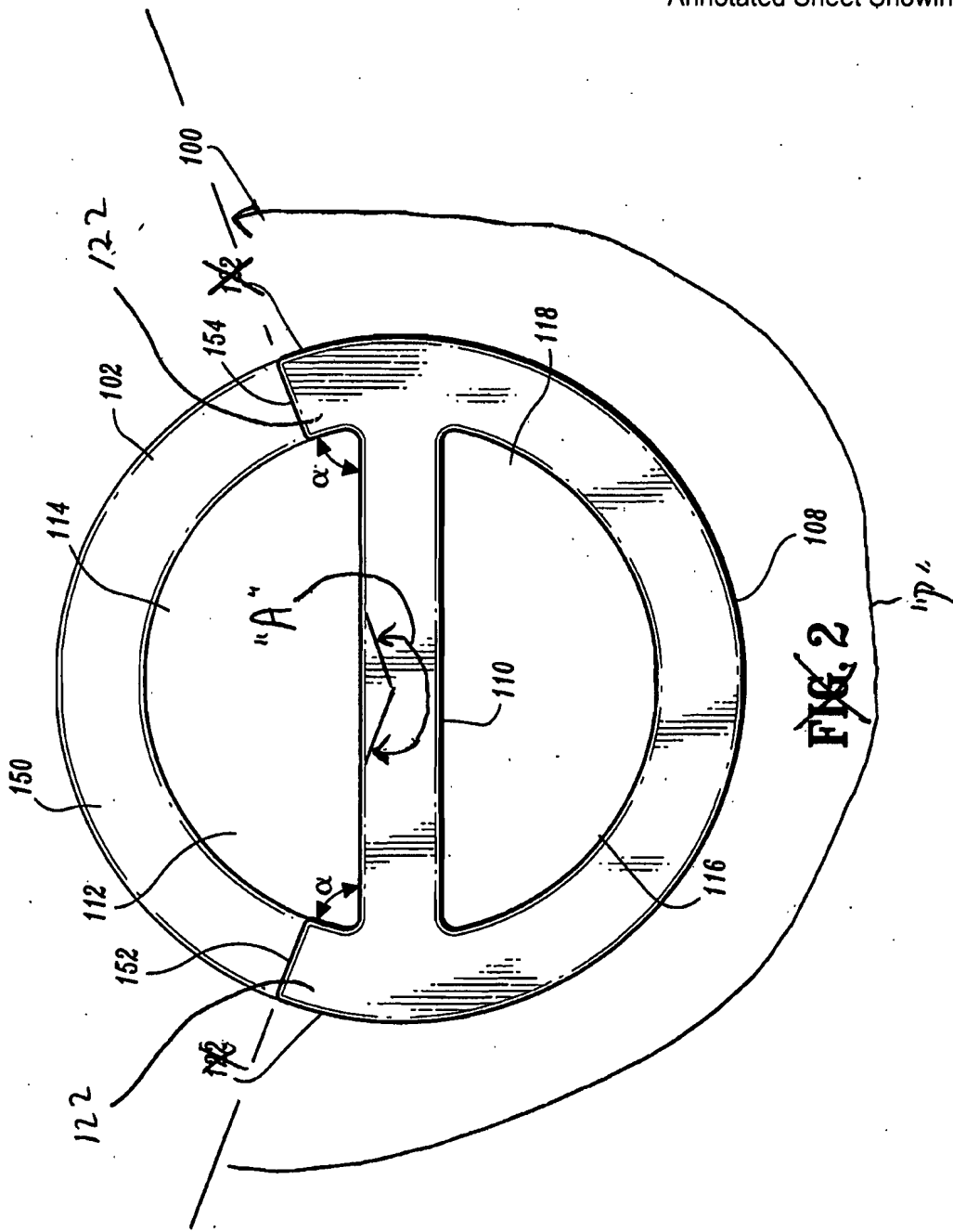


FIG. 2